The Dyetary of ghostly helthe.

6

Contemplatio sacratissime dei.
Genitricis semperq; virgīs marie

11

3–14

¶ The prologue.

IN the begynnyge of this newe yere/my good systers whan I consyder and se many frendes gyue tokens of custome one to another/whiche custome/some vse it for good lucke of a newe yere/some to procure carnal loue/some to get a greater benefyte therby/some to gette worldely fauour or mayntenaunce in yll/some to please & flatter them that ben yll/(whiche causes ben not commendable) some to procure loue and to contynue frendshyp and peas in the comune lyfe/bytwene neyghbour & neyghbour/whiche is ryght good and conuenyent to do. And some with ryght godly intent to purchace ghostly loue. For one ghostly frende to remembre another the more hartely in prayers/whi I thynke ryght commēdable. And after this intent (as I suppose) dyuers of you haue gyuen tokens vnto me. Wherfore hauynge nothynge redy to gyue vnto you agayne/I purpose in my mynde to prepare one token for you all/to profyte eche of you. This token thynke it truly I haue not of my selfe/but of god/as I haue herde & redde of holy doctours/and by coniecture of the waye to good lyuynge/and nothynge by experyence of my selfe. It is full vnsemynge to me for to shewe or wryte vnto you of the waye to vertue/whiche am not yet all out of ye way of wyckednes. Yet a gryndyngston maketh a knyfe bryght & sharpe/thoughe it be neuer the sharper it selfe. So I maye moeue you to make you sharpe & quycke to ghostly thynges & to clerenesse of good lyuynge/though I my selfe be ryght slowe and dull vnto the same. To teche goodnesse is a thynge that may not be vndone/of them that haue cure & rewle of other persones/though

they do but lytell good themselfe. Cryst sayd of the pha-
rysyes rulers of the people. Do as they saye / but not as
they do. Not withstandynge our lorde hathe gyuen me
a desyre to do well. I beseche hym I maye haue grace to
perfourme my desyre to his pleasure / honoure & laude.
Therfore though my symple lyuynge can styre you but
lytell. I trust that my good wyll and desyre that I haue
to your ghostly profyte shall incyte you bothe to encreace
the more in vertu / and also to helpe me with your pray-
ers vnto the same. A lytell Dyetary for your dayly con-
uersacyō I purpose for to wryte / deuydynge it into. xxiiij
consyderacyons / as the daye is deuyded into. xxiiij. hou-
res / whiche though it be rudely wryten / it maye profyte
you moche / yf ye wyll dylygētly put it i execucyon of wor-
kynge / and elles it profyteth lytell / but rather hurteth.
For cryst sayth a sermaunte that knoweth ȳ wyll of his
mayster and wyll not do therafter shalbe bette with ma-
ny great strokes. And who soeuer studyeth for the wyll
of god & forgete it not / but dylygētly put it to worke-
he shalbe blessed of god / and haue euerlastynge Joye. for
so doynge / yf he perceyuer therin.

¶ To remembre that we ben pylgrymes and to what place we ben towarde.

IT is necessary fyrst to cõsyder / that we bẽ here in this lyfe as pylgrymes / hauynge no longe restynge place / but alwayes beynge forwardes other to heuen were we shall haue eternall reste / orels we ben in the wronge way / the whiche shall lede vs to euerlastỹge sorowe. Lerne to knowe that one waye fro that other. And than euery daye whã ye shall go to do ony thynge / aske this questyon of youre selfe / sayenge in your mynde to your selfe. Whyder arte thou goynge / consyderynge wysely / whyder ye bẽ in ỹ waye of vertue or wyckednes / folowynge cryste or the deuyll / in the waye to heuẽ or to hell. And saye these verses. Vias tuas domine demonstra michi: et semitas edoce me. Dirige me in veritate tua et doce me: q̃a tu es deus saluator meꝰ: & te sustinui tota die. Set god for ỹ marke that ye wyll go vnto / take his commaundementes for youre waye & ronne stedfastly therin. Haue good hope in his goodnes / vtterly dystrustynge the dysceyuable cõfolacyons of ỹ worlde / thrugh the whiche many soules bẽ dysceyued.

¶ The precyousnesse of tyme and the shortnesse of the same.

SEcundarely it is to consyder the precyousnes of tyme / whiche is gyuen vs to do penaũce in / for our lyfe past and to labour for Joye in the lyfe to come. And how that god shall requyre

of euery persone how he hath expended the tyme gyue vnto hym. And thynke that euery tyme not spent to his honour is lost/and shalbe straytly punysshed. Behelde how shorte our tyme is/and how vntertayne/beynge no thynge surer but onely this tyme present/ꝑ is but now/ hauynge alwaye dethe suspecte/that cometh vpon vs sodeynly many dyuers wayes. And make alwaye a sure rekenynge for the tyme past. Sayenge this prayer dayly. O bone Jhesu: sint cor̃a te in obliuione mea tempora preterita valde male consumpta. Et concede: vt hoc temporis mei residium: tibi sit honorificum: michi fructuosum et proximo edificatorium. Qui viuis et regnas cum deo. ℞c. That is to say in Englysshe. O good lorde Jhesu let all my tymes past be forgoten before the/ꝑ I haue consumed very vil. And graunt that this residew of my tyme may be vsed in honour & worshyp vnto the/fruytfull vnto my selfe/and edyfyenge to my neyghbour/whiche lyuest with god the fader in vnyte of the holy ghost worlde without ende. Amen. And at euery tyme that ꝑ clocke dothe stryke/consyder that your lyfe is shorted by an houre/sayenge thus to our lady/for to socour you at ꝑ houre of dethe. Maria plena gratie: mater misericordie: tu nos ab hoste protege: & in hora mortis suscipe. Mary moder full of grace/moder also of mercy/defende vs from our enemy/and at the houre of dethe/take vs to thy protectyon. And so I truste there shall come great grace therof.

How god is present to vs and his angell.

REmembre alwaye that what soeuer ye do/ your lorde god is alwaye present/ seynge and consyderynge euery thought/ worde/ and dede/ and strayte shall call vs to a accõpte for thẽ. Therfore it is necessary to obserue good maner and reuerent behauyoure/ bothe inwarde in mynde/ and outwarde in body/ aswell in chambre or cell as in other secrete places/ as in presence of great astates/ hauynge alwaye honour and reuerence to god/ and to our good angell/ feryng & beynge ashamed to do that thynge in ỹ presence of god/ ỹ ye sholde be ashamed of in ỹ presence of men. And whã ye bẽ alone/ saye oftẽ this verse. **Qui cognoscis occulta cordis: parce peccatis nostris.** Lorde that knowest the pryuytes of harte/ we beseche the spare vs/ that we be not dampned for our synnes/ and great offences.

¶ Not onely the body/ but also the mynde muste be sparred vs from the occasyons of yll.

THynke though ye sholde be closed vp within. iiij. walles. It is not ynough to haue your bodyes sparred frome the occasyons of yll/ wher ỹ mynde is waundrynge abrode in carnall pleasure/ musynge vpon worldly vanytes/ besyed with workes and maters of other persones/ and carynge moche for youre frendes and kynne folkes/ occupyed somtyme with vnlawfull and vncleny thoughtes and desyres. Therfore ye muste close vp also your mynde and affecty on fro all suche thynges. And that must be by often and contynuall remembraunce of god/ as nere as ye maye. Close vp and hyde youre loue and mynde in ỹ depe and large woundes of our lorde Jhesu cryste by deuoute re-

membraunce of his pytefull passyon/ alwaye abydynge there/for there our enemyes dare not medle/ but whyder ye wyll or not/they wyll entre with you into the materyall cloyster/youre enemy the flesshe must nedes in/ for deuyll wyll not be behynde. And as I suppose/ye shall haue of hym more force and stronger batayle there than euer ye had before. And that we thynke now ryght lytell and easy/shall than perchaunce be full harde and greuous to ouercome. Therfore prepare youre selfe manly. Stande fast in fayth/and remembre ye rewarde of your victory/trustynge in god onely for strength.

How the worlde bryngeth in trouble vnto relygous persones.

The worlde trusseth his gere & hydeth them in a corner of a mannes soule/vnto ye tyme that he is entred into relygyon. And than the deuyll bryngeth them to lyght. So that those vanytes/synnes/and inquyet besynesse/that ye haue sene/herde/and ben in/shall than come to remembraunce/whiche now ye be nothynge troubled with/ as hyden within you. Than also the worlde shall sende vnto you by crafte of the deuyll/tydynges and tale berers whiche shall lette you of great profyte/yf ye be not ware. Sparre them out therfore and auoyde them from you/ and neuer be gladde to here worldly rumours/ne vayne talkynge. Let not the deuyll hyde vp suche thynges in youre soules that afterwarde maye put you to trouble. Be neuer gladde to talke and here of other persones yll demenour/of theyr beaute/theyr countenaunce/theyr apparell/and specyally of detraccyon or backbytynge of

ony maner of persones / but rather flee theyr company / or moeue them to saye well / and to speke that is honeste and conuenyent for to here / sayenge thus before ye shall speke vñ ony worldely persones. **Domine libera animam meam a labiis iniquis & lingua dolosa.** Good lorde I beseche the delyuer my soule from ỹ lyppes of wycked men & from a dysceyuable tongue.

¶ To order well euery tyme auoydynge ydelnesse.

Man after the counseyll of some good mā dyspose and order euery tyme of the day to some profyte bodely or ghostly. So that ydelenesse before all thynges maye be vtterly excluded. For ydelenesse is the moder of all yll / stepdame to vertue / forger of vnclennes / the way to vnstablenesse nurysher of vyces / increaser of slouthfulnesse / kyndeler of malyce and inuye. It sowyth yll thoughtes. It gendreth yll desyres / and bryngeth forth many yll workes. It maketh vs wery of ghostly iurnge. It putteth vs in fere of ghostly batayle / and dryueth vs frome the waye of penaunce. O fals ydelnes how many doest ỹ deceyue. ydelnesse is the snare that the deuyll hydeth ymonges ỹ grasse of the grene flourysshynge youthe / and ymonges the fallynge leues of the vayne worldely Ioye and pleasure / and very harde it is to scape it. Therfore beware that the deuyll in no wyse fynde you in this snare / but yf ye be caught therin / breke out betymes before he catche holde vpon you. For whan he hathe holde vpon you / it is harde to breke awaye.

¶ How we sholde gyue vs to dyuers exercyses.

And bycause our mynde whiche is moche subiecte vnto vanyte whyles we ben in this lyfe/ abydeth neuer lõge in one state. Therfore we must dryue away ydelnes by dyuers chaũge of good exercyses. As somtyme by good hande worke/ & conuenyent bodyly labour. Somtyme in prayer/ somtyme in study/ or redynge of scrypture or of some good workes of holy doctours. Somtyme i medytacyon and contemplacyon yf ye can attayne therto. And se ỹ youre hande warke be other to the honour of god/ to ỹ profyte of poore people/ or els for youre owne necessyte. And in euery thynge that ye shall do. Se fyrst that it be lawfull for you to do it. Secũdarely yf it become you for to do it. Thyrdely whyder it be expedyẽt for to do it. For all thỹges that ben lawfull and lemynge for you to do/ are not to be done/ but yf they ben expedyent. Saynt Poule to wytnes. **Omnia michi licẽt: set non omnia michi expediunt.** Therfore that thynge that is semỹge expedyent and not agayne the commaundement of god performe it/ sayenge before euery worke. In nomine patris. &c. with a Pater noster and an Aue maria.

Of exercyse in prayer and study.

Oure prayers besydes the houres of dewty whiche ye must be preferred before ony thỹge/ ye maye prolonge or make short as the holy ghost gyueth grace of deuocyon or good desyre. And bewate that longe prayer gender not tedyousnesse. For better it is to praye often breuely wt deuocyon/ than longe vndeuoutly/ excepte deuocyon be inspired by longe desyre. Bewate also ye make no bande

ne bone of nombre of psalmes or prayers/but vse them
for the tyme that ye haue pleasure and deuocyon in thē.
And where deuocyon slacketh/than go to redynge or to
some other exercyse/so conforteynge your spyrytes/auoy
dynge the synne of slouth. In your study and redynge of
bokes se that they ben conuenyent for you. And marke
well all suche thynges as make to the exemple of good
lyfe/bothe for to fele at your selfe/and to shewe it vnto o-
ther for the same intent. And before ye go to rede or stu-
dy/saye thus. **Spiritus sancti gratia illuminet corda et corpora nostra.** With a Pater noster. That
is the grace of the holy ghost lyght on vs bothe soule and
body. And after your redynge/remembre brefely what
ye haue redde/and than say thus. **Confirma hoc deus quod operatus es in nobis.** with a Pater no-
ster. How to be ordred at your vprysynge/whan ye wake
in the morynge from slepe after the houre assygned to
ryse. Forthwith lyfte vp your harte to god/cōmytynge
youre selfe to his protectyon/and gyue hym thākes/for
that he hathe preserued you that nyght past/sufferynge
no vayne thoughtes to fall into your mynde/but shor-
ly bielle you and fall vnto your prayer. Be neuer ouercō-
men with sluggy slynesse ne dulnesse of body/as some bē
that with gronynge and grutchynge ryse oute of their
beddes. But with a quycke mynde put away all slouth
as though eryst our spouse dyd call you vnto marryage/
sayenge to youre selfe. Ryse thou wretched body oute of
of thy couche/make the redy and lyght thy lampe/go
mete with thy spouse/and do thy duty leest thou be refu-
sed for comynge to late. Be not longe in ỹ apparyllynge
of youre selfe/but apply you vnto your worke or seruyce

entoyned to you for to do. With gladnesse of mynde lette no vanytes appere in youre apparell/ but kepe alwaye a semynge fourme and an vnylourme waye in your dres synge/ vsynge nother to rude vesture ne to precious/ but in a meane/ no wyse desyrynge to please the worlde by it/ but to honour god. Cal also vnto god for his helpe and grace/ that ye maye be stronge agaynst the malyce and power of your enemyes. For many haue be in great peryl bothe of body and soule/ bycause they haue not blessed them selfe & honoured god at theyr byrysynge. Therfore saye alwaye whan ye ryse some blessynge and prayer/ as ye maye fynde in dyuers bokes.

¶ Of herynge masse.

IF it may be/ here masse euery daye. For by that ye be made the more able to all good workes in the day folowynge/ and prosper ꝑ better in euery thynge. In masse tyme be dylygent as moche as ye maye to haue deuocyon/ commyttynge youre selfe and all that longeth vnto you to hym that is there present. The masse is the veray memoryall of Crystes passyon. Than yf ye wyl haue deuocyon/ fall to some medytacyon of Crystes holy passyon. For there is nothynge that kyndelyth mannes affeccyon so soone as ꝑ medytacyon therof. Yf ye wyl be perfytely purged from vyces. Yf ye wyll be indued with vertues. Yf ye wyll be lyghtned with vnderstandynge. Yf ye wyl haue victory of youre enemyes. Yf ye wyll haue consolacyon in aduersyte. Yf ye wyll haue swetenesse with teres in your prayers. Yf ye wyll departe pleasauntly oute of this lyfe. Yf ye wyll haue redely euerlastynge ioye. Vse deuoute medy-

tacyon of cryſtes paſſyon in your maſſe herynge. And al-
ſo euery other tyme beſore ye ſhall praye. The maſſe is
of meruey lous great effecte. For after the ſayenge of ſa-
ynt Auſtyn. By euery maſſe deuoutly ſayd is there one
ſoule delyuered out of purgatory/and one ſynner cõuer-
ted. Therfore here maſſe deuoutly/beſechynge our lorde
ſayẽge. Bleſſed Jheſu let me ſỹner be ỹ perſone ỹ ſhalbe
ſtedfaſtly conuerted vnto the. And ſay this prayer. Ia
criſti ſanctifica me. And whã ye be comonde/ſe that
ye dyſpoſe your ſelfe before with hye deuocyon & meke-
nes/by contrycyon/confeſſyon/and deuoute prayers/ſo
that ye maye receyue your maker to the ſaluacyon and
ſtrength of youre ſoules. And after to contynu the more
ſtedfaſt in vertu.

How goddes ſeruyce and prayer ſholde be ſayde.

The ſeruyce that ye be commaunded for to ſay
and al that longeth to obedyence/ſe that ye ful
fyll moſt dylygently before all thynge. For o-
ther prayers ben not acceptable to god/yf ye
leue on thoſe thynges that ye are bounde to of
dewte. Therfore whan the bell ryngeth to ſeruyce/conſy
der as it were ỹ trumpe that ſhalbe blowen at ỹ Judge-
ment. Than hye you faſte to chyrche wt great meknelle
and fere/to treat and dyſcuſſe youre cauſes before god ỹ
moſt hye Judge/moſt myghty/moſt ferefull/moſt
wyſe/moſt ryghtwyſe/but yet moſt mercyfull. Remẽ-
bre that he is mercyful to all them that ben meke & obe-
dyent/and theyr complayntes and petycyons onely he
delyteth to here. Therfore dyſpoſe your ſelf to mekenes
afore your prayer/by ſome medytacyon/as of your ſyn-

full lyfe wͭ sorynes therfore / of your fewe merytes ⁊ innumerable demerytes / of ẏ dayly mysery in this lyfe / of ẏ infynyte peynes for synne after this lyfe. Of the great endelesse Joye in heuē / of the great goodnes of god / for delayenge our punysshement / for ẏ we sholde amēde our lyfe. Of ẏ great mercy of our sauyour Jhesu / sufferynge bytter passyon for our redempcyon. Whiche al / but these pryncypally ben great causes for to meken our hartes / ⁊ to serue god deuoutely. And whan ye haue great deuocyon by mekenesse. Saye your seruyce ⁊ prayers not onely in your one persone / as for your selfe / but in the persone of our moder ẏ holy chyrche. In ẏ whiche there bē some as prysoners in ẏ peynes of purgatory. Some as traytours that ben obstynate synners. Some as suers for theyr pardon ẏ ben penytent. Some as mynysters and seruauntes that ben in the state of grace. Some ben assystent wͭ god / to be our patrones and vocates they ben holy angels ⁊ sayntes. Now ymagyne that somtyme oure lorde speketh vnto vs / ⁊ we somtyme vnto hym in oure psalmes and other seruyces that we saye. And somtyme we treat for the prysoners. Somtye we cōplayne of our aduersaryes. Somtyme we desyre hȳ to spare his traytours / ẏ they may haue space to amende. Somtyme we labour to our patrones ⁊ vocates for to helpe to opteyne fauour ⁊ grace. Somtyme we magnyfy his power / his wysdome / his goodnesse / with lawe and prayse. Therfore thynke it no lytell cause that ye come to chyrche for. Before a temporall kynge causes ben dyscussed / for this bodyly lyfe with great dylygēs / fere / ⁊ reuerēce. Moche more thā ought we wͭ great mekenes / reuerēce / ⁊ fere / dyscus our ghostly maters for the safe garde and promocyon of our soules before the hygh Judge. And thoughe

ye vnderstande not what ye saye/consyder that ye bē as a poore wretche ẏ hath a complaynt or supplycacyon to put vnto the kynge/made by a lerned man/wherin all your desyre is conteyned more expedyently/than ye can do it your selfe. Thus remēbre where and in whose presence ye bē/and for what cause. And before ye go to your seruyce call for grace and saye. **Rex christe clemētissime: tu corda nostra posside: vt tibi laudes debitas: reddamus omni tēpore.** Suffer not youre mynde to wāder as nere as ye maye. And saye after euery houre where ye haue ben neclygent. **Deus propitius esto michi peccatori.** And whan ye haue sayd ẏ is your duty/than saye your other prayers and memoryes of sayntes as your deuocyon is moeued.

To haue a synguler deuocyon to some specyall sayntes.

IT is very good to haue a synguler deuocyon/to some specyall sayntes/in whome ye haue great confydence to be youre aduocates/helpers/and defenders at all nedes to call on thē/whiche maye opteyne for you ẏ ben not worthy or able of your selfe. But moost specyally in ony wyse to haue ẏ gloryous quene of heuē moder of cryst at all tyme in moost louynge reuerence with moost hardy affeccyon louynge vnto her/as to moste sure refuge in all nedes/perylle/& temptacyons/takynge her next cryst/for moost hye and trusty vocate/gyuynge euery daye some synguler laude & prayer to her mercyful goodnes. And ẏ your deuocyon and reuerēce to her made/be ẏ more acceptable. Study to folowe her in pure chastyte & clennes of body & soule

with all mekenelle of herte and lowlynelle to euery per-
sone in worde and dede. We haue so many enemyes and
they ben so crafty / that without her helpe & other holy
sayntes / we are not able to escape theyr daunger. The
fore chose you suche patrones ỹ may helpe you in this
daũgerous lyfe / and defende your soules from all cruell
enemyes at the houre of dethe specyally / and brynge you
gracyously to perpetuall safegarde.

¶ Te commendacyon of vyrgynyte.

REmembre wysely to whome ye bē despoused.
Whome ye desyre to haue in maryage / & pray
hym mekely that hathe inspyred you with so
good wyll / and gyuen you suche desyre to pre-
serue and perfourme the same. Ye haue promysed youre
vyrgynyte to Cryst. Thynke this came not of your selfe
for it is vnpossyble so to do and contynue / but onely by
grace. Consyder howe precyous a tresoure ye bere in a
frayle vessell. Remembre what rewarde / what glory /
what crowne of Joy ye shall haue / by kepynge of pure
vyrgynyte. And fere what peyne / what shame / what cō-
fusyon / what dāpnacōn ye shall fall in yf it be lost. What
treasure is better than that / wherwith ye maye by heuē.
wherin angelles greatly delyte. Wherby Cryste hȳ selfe
is allect and moeued to loue you specyally. And to gyue
(not onely hym selfe) to you / but also euery thynge that
is good. The swetenes of meke vyrgynyte gaue so swete
an odour into heuen / that it made the kynge of all kyn-
ges to haue suche a celestyall concupyscēce and loue vn-
to the moost meke vyrgyne Mary ỹ he descended frome
heuen to erth for to be maryed vnto oure nature / but ye

shall not be crowned tyll ye be well proued as golde in ꝑ furneys. For scrypture sayth/that he that is not tẽpted is not proued. Wyrgynyte is golde/ your Cell is the furneys/temptacyon is the fyre/ the deuyll is the kyndler and blower of this fyre/your body is the erthen vessell/ wherin this golde is put to be proued. Whiche vessell yf it be broken by ony vyolent fyre/the golde is shedde out and loste/and the vessell can neuer be repared and made hole agayne.

¶ Wyrgynyte can not be get ne kepte without great labour and peyne.

Seynge ꝑ chastyte & wyrgynyte bē gyftes of a spyrytuall grace of god & nothyge of our merytes. For we can not be chast or contynent/ but yf god gyue it vs by grace. Therfore they ben vnworthy to haue so noble a gyfte ꝑ refuse to take some labour & peyne for it. They ꝑ thynke to be chast ymōges delyces & deynte cherysshynges of ꝑ body/they ꝑ wyl be cōtynent where great feestynge is & deynte fare/ they ꝑ fere not to be cōuersaūte ymōges vnchast & ryotous persones/& not to be tẽpted for to be forced wt etynge & drynkynge & not to be defiled/to hyde fyre in theyr bosome/& not to be brent/they are fore deceyued. For I thynke it very harde otherls inpossyble. Therfore beware ye bē not deceyued presumynge to moche in these thynges vpon your owne strength. For wout great cōtrycyon & affliccyon of the flesshe & great helpe of gracce/ true chastyte can nother be get nor kepte. Remēbre ꝑ glasse is fraple & may endure no dystresse. Also great aduētures many tymes do curs ꝑ dyce. Therfore beware ye ioperde not to ferre/but euermore eschewe ꝑ occasyōs of yl. For ꝑ wyse

mā sayth. Who soeuer loueth yp̄l he shall perysshe therin

¶Of the vertue of sadnesse.

SEe ye be of sadde behauyour / bothe in mynde and outwarde gesture. Kepe your mynde dylygently in sadnes & gyue it all to spyrytuall exercyses / sufferynge no vayne thoughtes to reste therin. And myghtely subdewe ỹ concupyscence & passyons of ỹ body / as wrath / carnall loue / bodely or worldly fere / sensuall ioye / or dyssolute laughynge For ye can not be well ordred outwarde / but yf these ben ordred & well ruled inwarde / but yet ỹ outwarde behauyour helpeth moche to ouercome these inwarde passyons. And therfore it behoueth to kepe wysely ỹ bodyly. v. wyttes ỹ ye shall se / here / or touche / nothynge ỹ sholde styre you to yll / or dysteyne good maners / kepe youre syght close towarde ỹ erthe / cōsyderynge ỹ the eye is a these / & wyll betraye the soule yf it be not warely kepte. Fyre not your syght vpon beawtefull thynges and here no vayne ne vycyous comynge / seynge lest dethe wyll entre in at youre wyndowes & infecte your soules with synne.

Of sadnesse & discrecyon in speche & other behauyoure.

MOst dylygently refrayne youre tonge & speke not wout a reasonable questyon be made vnto you / or els whā ye ben constrayned by euydent nede / & than study to gyue an answere brefely & mekely spekynge wt̄ sad cōtenaunce / reuerēce / & swete fere of god / eschewynge alway talkynge ỹ occasyons of ỹ same / except it be of ghostly maters / & wt̄ ryght ghostly persones. Speke nothynge but yf it be semynge for ỹ

tyme/place/ & persone. Myxte your honest myrth wt sad
nes/bothe in in speche/laughyge/ & gesture of body/wt-
out rownynge or castynge ye syght towarde ony persone
suspectly wout lystynge or moeuynge of the heed or ony
other mēbre vnsemyngely. Be gentyll wout grutchyge.
youre coūtenaunce lowly & cherefull wout frownynge/
lowrynge or derysyon. Whā ye speke/lawgh/or smyle/se
it be wout scornynge or lowde voyce. Be not to hasty nor
to slowe in your goynge. Shewe no slouggysshnesse in
in your restynge. Inquyre not of other persones cōuer-
sacyons ne cōsyder theyr defautes. Refourme ye is amys
in other persones wout ony reprouynge. Nother prayse
ne dysprayse your selfe/nor greatly other psone. Speke
nothynge to be reputed holy or cōnynge. Gyue place to
Ire betymes & to thē ye multyply wordes agaynst you/
& forgyue shortly theyr errour or neglygence. And thus
ye shall kepe ye vertu of sadnesse/ & dyscrecyon/whiche is
is a great helpe to chastyte/ & to all other vertues. Wher
to sayt Poule dothe moeue vs/sayenge. Let your sadnes
be knowen to all men. And so by good exemple ye maye
profyte other & meryte very moche.

¶ How refeccyon ought to be take.

As a seke mā receyneth his medycyne/so take
your bodyly refeccyon. A seke mā thykes his
medycyne very bytter therfore he wyll take
nomore thā shall suffyse for his helthe/ & yfhe
do/it may be to his hurte/so in lykewyse consyderynge
the peryll vnto chastyte that is in meetes and drynkes/
they sholde be bytter vnto you/nothyge gladde to take
ony more thanne sholde susteyne nature/ feryngе by to
moche etynge and drynkynge for to gyue strength vnto

your aduersary/and to noury sshe youre pryue enemy/
increasynge sekenes of the soule. Therfore whan ye go
vnto your meet/thynke alwaye vpon your chastyte/fe-
rynge lest the venym that is hydde in meet and drynke
do not infecte the body with carnall luste or slouth. And
so consequently the soule by concupyscence & neclygence
in the seruyce of god. Saynt Jerom techeth holy vyr-
gynes wylleth that after they be passed chyldehood and
growynge aege they sholde ete no flesshe/ne drynke no
wyne/excepte the tyme of sekenesse. And commaundeth
that suche sobrenesse sholde be kepte in meet and drynke
that the body sholde rather complayne/than to reioyce
in full appetyte/so that the stomake sholde not nede me-
dycynes/for to cause degestyon/but so to breke the appe
tyte of the body/that it be not lesse apte vnto watchynge/
prayer/study/or contemplacyon after the mele/than it
was before. The wyse man Salomon sayth. I haue de
termyned w̄ my selfe in mynde to restrayne my flesshe
fromc wyne. For this intent. That I myghte gyue my
mynde vnto wysedome and connynge/and eschewe foly.
Foly can not be auoyded/nor godly wysedome opteyned
but by abstynence frome moche etynge and drynkynge.
Therfore sayth out sauyoure Cryst. Take hede ꝑ youre
hartes ben not accombered with Glotony. Exemple we
haue of Danyell/Ananya/Mary/and Mysaell/chyldr̄
of great abstynence. To whome our lorde gaue excellēt
wysdome and connynge/so that they exceded ferre all ꝑ
wyse lerned men in the kynkedome of Babylon. And all
that euer haue had the grace of holy wysdome of deuout
contemplacyon/or reuelacyon hath come by it/by mea-
nes of abstynence. And constrary. Moche etynge & dryn-
kyng haue caused moche synne and foly. As it appereth

of Noye and Loth with other/ & of ẏ ryche Glotone in the gospell. Sewe not sensuall appetyte therfore to his full desyre. So prouyde to your nede/ that ye may swage hũger/ & yet not satyssy your bodyly appetyte. Regarde not the deyntynesse of meetes and drynkes/ but nedely sustentacyon of the frayle body contynually decayenge. And beware ẏ voluptuousnes crepe not in vnder ẏ cloke of nede. Some there ben ẏ fere great abstynence or watchynge/ bycause of sekenes or wekenes of body/ ferynge to be not strõge to serue god. And I fere me many tymes it is but Excusatio in peccatis. For full fewe ther bẽ that haue that feruour or loue to watche or to absteyne so moche. And yf they had for the loue of god. I thynke he wolde gyue them dyscrecyon withall/ or otherwyse prouyde for them. I praye god it be not to moche/ that many thynke to lytell. True dyscrecõn is to preferre ẏ soule before the body/ whithe can not be without some peyne of the body.

¶ Of behauynge at the borde.

Syt honestly at your meet. Gyue place to youre better/ bothe in order of syttynge and in fyrste takynge of youre meet. Use no Janglynge/ tryflynge/ nor lyghtnes at ẏ borde/ & hate vtterly detraccyon & backbytynge. Be content with suche as is sette before you without grutchynge/ and fede not of to many dysshes nor to gredely. For in many meetes saythe ẏ wyse man ye can not fayle of sekenesse. And as ye fede ẏ body with bodyly fode/ so fede ẏ soule wͭ ghostly fode/ as by redynge of some holsome and ghostly werkes wherin your soules maye be edyfyed/ gyue dylygence to

the herynge therof with all sylence / youre mynde and
intent set holy therupon. And as ye se some great este
tes of theyr charytable goodnes wyll se some poore peo
ple be serued afore them selfe. So in lyke wyse ghostly /
before euery mele serue those poore soules in purgatory
that haue lest helpe / with a pater noster and an aue ma
ria / before ye serue your owne bodyes. And ye shall de
serue (I thynke) ryght great mercy and rewarde of god
therfore. Before ye ete ony mete / lyfte vp youre hartes
deuoutely to god with laude and prayse to hym and say
grace / beseechynge hym to blesse your meet and pou / so
the refeccyon whiche ye shall take / maye be to strengthe
you in his seruyce / not ferdynge the body to rebell agaynst
the soule. After meet gyue thankes to god deuoutely w̄
sayenge grace / addynge at ỹ laste ende this lytell prayer.
**Deus det viuis gratiam: defunctis misericor
diam: ecclesie sue pacem: domino apostolico &
nobis peccatoribus vitam eternam. Amen.**
Wherto is graunted. lx. yeres of pardon.

How to be occupyed after meet / and to beware of temptacyon.

After your dyner go to youre worke / study / or
prayer as ye ben assygned to / and do that dy
lygently / remembrynge alwaye god & youre
good angell present what soeuer ye do / & ap
ply euery thynge that ye done reuetently to his honour.
Beware of ydelnesse and lyght maners / and forgete not
your enemyes of the contrary behalfe / whiche neuer re
steth / but full besyly laboureth contynually to destroye
your soules w̄ ryght great crafte & malyce. Haue them al

waye lusspecte in euery thynge ꝑ ye shall do and thynke. And beware ꝑ he hyde hym not ymonge your good werkes by vayne glory/for than he wyll make them nought Somtyme he wyll bryngе in good thoughtes & purposes for an yll intent/for to lette a better thynge/or for to inquyete the conscyence. He cometh somtyme easely/somtyme fercely/somtyme pryuely/somtyme pertly. And ꝑ more ye flee fro hym ꝑ fyrcer he assayleth you. But what remedy? Truly we haue no strēgth nor polycy in regarde to our aduersary. Therfore let vs not trust in our selfe Our lorde let hym be our strengthe. Our good angelles and holy sayntes helpe & conforte to vs. Let vs therfore cōmytte our selfe to hym/& call for helpe betymes in euery temptacyon. Cleue stydfastly to his loue/with fere of his displeasure. Remembrynge what peyne he suffered to bryngе man into the state of grace. And therfore suffer not to be brought out therof for a lytell short pleasure or for sufferynge a lytell displeasure or a short peyne. It pleseth god very moche/whan ony persone auoydeth temptacyon betymes/and falleth to prayer and prayenge of god. For than ꝑ thynge ꝑ the deuyll had forged for mannes great hurte/it tourned vpon his owne heed wt cōfusyon. And ꝑ persone ꝑ so resysteth/shall haue double rewarde/bothe for his victory & for his prayer vnto god.

How to ouercome temptacyon.

IF he be very fierce agaynst you wt tēptacyon or trybulacōn/how soeuer greuous it be/dyspere not. Thynke there ben .xii. dyuers houres in ꝑ daye/they shall not be alyke vnto you. Some good and some badde. Thynke how oure lorde loketh vpon you to proue youre stydfastnesse & manlynesse/for to

gyye you the larger trowne of glory / and saye with To-
be. Yf we haue not taken good thynges of the hande of
god / why sholde we not take yll. And remembre holy sa-
yntes that haue bē troubled so before. And marke it wel
that whome soeuer god wyll vysyte with grace and con
solacyons / hym wyll he fyrste proue in the fyre of trybu-
lacyon. Therfore neuer gyue vp to youre aduersary / ne
grutche not with the troubleous temptacyons / nor loke
tomoche of that that is layde to you by temptacyon / but
go forwarde aboute youre good besynesse / as thoughe ye
dysdeyned to here of suche thynges. Orels speke thus
in your mynde / refourmynge your soule. Lo my soule /
lo how ẏ deuyll knocketh at thy gate. Yf thou sufferest
hym to come in / god thy strength shall go from the / and
thou shalt perysshe with great mysery and suffer great
peyne and shame before god and man. O thou frayle bo
dy / all this wyckednesse procedeth of the. Beware thou
be not subiecte vnto the deuyll. Consyder how that god
is present / to se how thou shalt fyght with thyne enemy
Cry for helpe vnto heuen / that they maye assyste vs and
put awaye our aduersaryes. Thou can not se them / and
therfore the batayll is the more peryllous. Suffer and
take vpon the a lytell peyne / and thynke how pleasaunt
thy vyctory shalbe. And contrary yf thou folowe ẏ short
pleasure of thy temptacyon / eternall peyne wyll folowe.
Therfore beware / ⁊ thā fall to prayer / ⁊ what soeuer ẏ
deuyll speketh in you by tēptacyon / thȳke it is not your
worde nor youre doynge / therfore care not for it / but go
forwarde / trustȳge that as after great stormes / cometh
fayre weder. Soo after great trybulacyon shall folowe
ghostly consolacyon.

¶ How study or medytacyon in holy wrytynge

For this cauſe I wolde ye ſholde alwaye lere truſtynge nothyng vpon your owne ſtrēgth but alwaye ſuſpecte your owne frayle / and as a douue that fereth the hawke dothe cō munely vſe the ryuer ſyde / and as a glaſſe doth ſpy in ỹ water ỹ ſhadowe of the hawke flyenge for to deuoure her / and ſo is aware of her & ſaueth her ſelfe. So I wolde ye ſholde do. The ryuers or waters ben the ſentences of holy ſcrypture / ỹ lyfe of our ſauyour Jheſu cryſt / & of other holy ſayntes. Whiche flowynge to the mooſt clere fountayne of the dyuyne wyſedome dothe ſhewe & diſcouer ỹ ſubtyll crafte & fals ſuggeſtyō of our enemy the deuyll / & techeth vs how we ſhalbe ware of hym / for to eſcape his daunger. Nothynge aſſwageth cō cupyſcence more / nothyng putteth yll thoughtes awaye better / than with the ſtudy or medytacyon of ỹ worde of god & holy redynge. Unto ỹ whiche I wolde ỹ ye ſholde ſo accuſtome your mynde and occupy your hartes ſo ther upon / that whan ye go to bedde ye myght fall on ſlepe in therthynkynge of ſome ſentence of holy ſcryptures or ſa yntes lyues & dreame of them in your ſlepe ỹ aſſoone as ye ſhall wake / they maye cleue to youre memory. And therfore whan ye be troubled or waked by the crafte or yllyſyon of youre enemy / beware of vayne thoughtes be tymes / auoydynge all idilneſſe of body and mynde. And occupy you thus otherwiſe in prayers.

Of meekenelle.

Take this for a sure conclusyon/though chastyte be the very floure and beaute of all vertues/ yet without the grounde of mekenesse it can not growe/but it fadeth and vanysshethaway/as snowe agaynst the sonne. Mekenes is the fundacyon of all vertues/ þ strengthe of the soule/ the cõfusyon of our great enemy the deuyll/a vessell of all grace/ the moder of peas/the restynge place of the holy ghost. And pryde contrary wyse is begynnynge of all synne & mooste wekenes of the soule/whiche expelled angell fro̅ heue̅/ and man from paradyse. Yf ye ioye in onythynge/ioye in our lorde/& not for that ye come of noble vertuous lygnage or of ryche parentes/nor for that ye prefere pouerte before ryches/nor for that ye haue forsaken ryche marryages/but shewe by mekenes how nere you ben our mekest spouse Cryste/the more meke/the more nere hym ye be. Beware that ye ben not proude of mekenes/but dysprise your selfe/dysprise none other persone. And set nought to be dysprysed/but rather be glad. Yf ye wyll be þ spouse of Cryste/whiche beynge moost ryche in heuen/chose to be moost poore in erthe. He chose a poore moder/a poore house to be borne in/where he was moost honoured in heue̅. He came hyder to take dysprytes/reproues/& great peynes mekely as a lambe. Therfore folowe this lambes as ye haue knowen other bygynnes do before where soeuer ye go. And thynke that ye can neuer be to meke/cõsyderynge what grace cometh alwaye therby.

¶Of obedyence.

If ye haue true mekenesse/ye shall repute euery persone your better/& youre selfe as a seruaũte

or a hunde mayde/what soeuer degre ye be of. Wherupon folowe perfyte obedyence/whiche vneth god to man & mā to god in perfyte charyte. Saynt Barnarde sayth yf ye wyll be wyse/be obedyent. For thus it is wrytē. yf thou coueyteste Wysedome/obserue and do that is commaunded the/and god shall gyue it the. This obedyence must be obserued (not i seruyle fere) but with good affeccyon of loue & charyte (not for fere of peyne) but for loue of Justyce. Obedyence is that vertue that graffeth all other vertues in ỹ soule. It preserueth and kepeth them surely after they ben graffed. It is better than sacrifyce For by sacrifyce is gyuen away the temporall goodes/ and by obedyence is vtterly lefte and forsaken the owne selfe wyll. Of our owne wyll cometh all synne. Than yf we forsake our owne wyll/resygnynge it to god and to our superyoure/we forsake all synne/for we may do nothynge but as they wyll. yf they wyll no synne/we therfore beynge obedyent/maye do no synne. What is than more expedyent thā to haue obedyence (whiche hadde) we nede to fere no peynes of heli. The order of obedyēce is thus. It is more our duty to obey god than man/the superyour than the inferyour/better to obey your owne heed than a straunger. And it is specyally good to obey one to another/yf it letteth not the obedyence to the superyour. A true obedyēcer is gladde to be scruyseable vnto euery one of his company/& sory to be chargeable or comberous to them. Louynge & gentyll to all/& deuoute vnto god. The greater that persone be that is dysobeyed the greuoser is the inobedyence. The more easy the commaundement be/the more greuoser is the contempte. And yf it fortune you to contempne the cōmaundement (as god forbydde) of youre heed/beware in ony wyse ye

contempne not the remedy / Whiche is meke penaunce / redy to be sory with submyttynge of your self to correccyon / fallynge to the fete of them whome ye offende. Note well this sayenge of saynt Barnarde. Whan my superyour (sythen he) cõmaũdeth me to scylẽce / yf a worde per chaunce escape thrughe negligence or forgetynge my selfe. I knowlege my selfe gylte of inobedyẽce venyally / but yf wyttyngly & with delyberacyon of a contempte / I breke out into wordes / wylfully brekynge the lawe of sylence. I dyscerne and Iudge my selfe a greuous synner / & that deedly and dampnably / yf I perceyuer impenytent vnto my lyues ende. For Cryste sayth to them y bẽ rulers. Who that dysppyseth you / dysppyseth me. Therfore kepe wel this vertue of obedyence vnto god / & your superyour / and god shalbe obedyent vnto your prayers and petycyons. And be alwaye redy to obey with a good wyll without ony taryenge or delay / ỹ ye may saye this verse truely. **Paratũ cor meum deus : paratũ cor meũ.** &c. My harte is redy good lorde / my harte is redy to obey in wyll and dede.

¶ Of this vertue of pacyence.

When ye ben troubled with iniuryes / reprouues / sclaũders / with enuye / or malyce agaynst you / with losse of goodes / or aduersyte and sekenesse. Remembre your selfe betymes / before ony passyon of heuynesse or impacyence ryseth in you / thynkynge they bẽ the messangers of your spouse Jhesu Cryste sende for your welthe / other to reforme your maners / or to proue your loue / whyder it be stedfast and faythfull or not. And not onely

ſuffer them pacyently / but alſo gladly / as ſaynt Poule
dyd and many other holy men and women before / & conſ
ſyder it is but foly and vayne to loke for heuen with plea
ſure and delytes / ſeynge that Cryſte our ſouerayne lorde
and ſpouſe aſcended not to heuen / but by manly fyght /
with great peyne & paſſyon. And that it were no ryghte
nor ſemynge / that the ſeruaunt ſholde ſtande in better
condycyon thā his mayſter. Better it is to take pacyent
ly / that thynge ỹ ye can not auoyde with hope of a good
rewarde / thā to grutche wt ſuerte of great punyſſhemēt
And byleue it truely that your aduerſary can not do you
ſomoche good / by no fauour / ſeruyce or benefyte / as he
dothe whan he troubleth you / yf ye take it pacyently /
wout grutche or malyce agaynſt hym. And thanke god
therof / as for a token of great loue. Ye wyll aſke me who
can do thus. I anſwere / Euery perſone that is in ỹ ſtate
of grace / and wyll apply hym ſelfe therto dylygently / as
I ſuppoſe truly. Cryſte ſuffered dethe for vs / leuynge to
vs exemple (not onely hym ſelfe) but alſo many holy ſa
yntes / that by theyr exemple we ſholde folowe theyr ſtep
pes. Exemple we haue of ſaynt Katheryne of Seene be
ynge a chylde. Whan her fader and moder / bredren & ſyſ
tren were ſette all to do her dyſpleaſure / & to trouble her
holy mynde / from her ghoſtly purpoſe / ſhe ordred & dyſ
poſed in her deuoute ymagynacyon / to accepte her fader
as Cryſte / her moder as our lady / her bredren & ſyſtren
as ỹ apoſtles. And what ſoeuer was ſayde or done to her
by them / ſhe toke it as it had ben done of Cryſte / of his
moder / or of his apoſtles / with meke pacyence / gladde
obedyence / and louely obſeruaūce / thrughe the whiche /
ſhe deſerued increace of moche grace. Our lorde alſo byd
deth vs to do good to them that hatē vs / and promyſeth

vs the kyngedome of heuen therfore.

¶ The conclusyon.

When the daye is almoost paste / wherin ye haue tasted bothe swete and soure / ꝑ is to saye / ye haue had somtyme trybulacyon & somtyme cõsolacyon / bothe spyrytually & tẽporally. Thã tourne vnto your selfe / callynge to remembrauñce wt dylygent serche / how ye haue expended ꝑ daye in euery thynge ꝑ ye haue done or lefte vndone / ꝑ behoued you to haue do / or ꝑ became you not to do / beynge sorry for euery defaute / & bewayle all ꝑ is yll. For thoughe in ꝑ morny ge ye purposed for to forsake all yll / and for to exercyse good werkes / yet often tymes whan ye remẽbre your selfe well / ye shall fynde ꝑ ye haue done many ylles / and fewe good thynges. Therfore in suche causes ordeyne and kepe a chappytre euery day for your selfe. Be rygorous vpon youre owne defautes / & let nothyng scape vncorrecti / yf ye wyll ꝑ god shall spare you. Examyne how ꝑ reason hath be obedyent vnto the keythe / & how she hathe occuppyed her all day. Also how ꝑ wyl hath be ruled by reason / & kepte ꝑ rules of goddes cõmaũdementes / & whether she hath be to sampleyer wt sensualyte. How ꝑ syght / ꝑ herynge / ꝑ speche / wt euery sense & mẽbre of ꝑ body hath be occuppyed euery houre of the day / & in what place. The ymagynacyon & memory wt what & wt whome they haue ben occuppyed. Se whether the body haue be rempsse and slowe in seruyce / watchynge / study / or labour. Serche yf ꝑ mouthe haue spoken ony vayne / sturdy / or vnclenly wordes / ꝑ sholde offende other god or man. Or yf ye can fynde ony other ex-

celle agaynſt good cryſten maners. Than bowe downe
your harte & body mekely / & praye god of forgyuenesse /
ſubmyttynge your ſelfe to his correccyon / & be gladde to
take it in this lyfe / & to do wylfull penaunce. There ben
iij. exercyſes of ghoſtly helthe / whiche ben neceſſary for
euer perſone to vſe dayly. The. i. is to knowe youre ſelfe
a ſynner / & to be ſory for your ſynnes. The. ij. is to purpoſe
for to be ware of ſynne / & to forſake it for euermore. The
iij. is for to intende to be confeſſed of all your ſynnes / and
do penaunce for the ſame. Who ſoeuer before they ſlepe
dothe theſe. iij. thynges / ſurely though it behapped (as
god forbyd) ỹ he ſholde dye ſodeynly / yet there is hope of
grace & ſaluacyon / thoughe he were in deedly ſynne. Af-
ter ye haue made thus recollacyon of your ſelfe / & gade-
red your defautes togyder / bynde thē in a būdell & caſte
thē in ỹ fyre of hell / that is remembrynge the peynes or-
deyned for them / beynge ſory and in full purpoſe neuer
to fall agayne. And be more ſory for the offence of god /
than for the damnage that ſholde folowe therof to youre
ſelfe. Than after your prayers ſayd / dreſſe you towarde
your bedde with moſt honeſt maner / as thoughe Cryſt
your ſpouſe were preſent. And whan ye be ſet in youre
bedde / bleſſe you with the ſygne of ỹ croſſe / cōmyttynge
your body and ſoule vnto youre ſpouſe Cryſte and to the
keppynge of youre good angell. Than laye you downe re-
uerētly with your armes a croſſe vpon youre breeſt. Be-
ware than dylygently of vayne thoughtes / and putte a-
waye vayne temptacyons quyckly. Remembre ỹ youre
enemy the deuyll ſlepeth not / and how that god dothe ſe
all your behauyour / bothe in mynde and without forth.
Therfore vſe clenly maner wt̄ your ſelfe. And beware of
carnall deſyres. Tender not youre body to moche wt̄ ſofte

& warme lyenge. Satysfy not youre body in al that it desyreth (yf ye do) it shall put you in great ieopardy. Yf ye can not slepe shortly after ye ben layde/occupy your selfe in psalmes/orels vpon your beedes/and with thē dryue all fantysyes frome your mynde/excepte it be occupyed aboute holy thynges/by good medytacyon. Do fallynge on slepe as I haue sayde before. Thus after the nyghte be ronne vnto matyns tyme/than ryse chercly/and begynne to occupy the daye agayne/after the counseyll before. And as youre rule dothe techc you and bynde you/that ye may lyue here soberly/meekely/& iustly in clennes of conscyence/& hereafter obteyne eternall lyfe/& ioye without ende/whiche our lorde Jhesu graunt vs. Amen.

DEO GRACIAS.

¶ Imprynted by me Wynkyn de Worde. The yere of our lorde. M.CCCCC.x.xx. Of Nouembre y. xx. daye.